There are actually many forms of self-care (seven to be exact) that you should embrace in order to feel best in all areas of life.

The seven types of self-care are:

1. **Emotional self-care**
2. **Physical self-care**
3. **Mental self-care**
4. **Social self-care**
5. **Spiritual self-care**
6. **Practical self-care**
7. **Professional self-care**

Read on to learn how you can tend to each area so you can dial in your self-care like a pro and keep your health and wellness at the forefront to always show up as your healthiest self for your family and clients.

The Importance of Self-Care

We all know self-care plays an important part in ensuring we're at the top of our health and wellness game. It's the key to preventing burnout, feeling balanced, and leading a fulfilling, purposeful and productive life. And it's even more important to prioritize as we continue to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic.

Throughout your day-to-day life, a regular self-care routine may help build self-esteem and confidence, reduce generalized anxiety and stress, and improve your overall happiness. In the long-term, a solid self-care practice can help manage chronic illness, improve interpersonal relationships, and–according to a 2017 study from the American Heart Association–may play a role in the prevention of future diseases.

Emotional Self-Care

Our ability to regulate our emotions and cope with difficult feelings as they arise is vital to our happiness and overall quality of life. That's why **emotional self-care—the actions we take to connect with our emotions and process them in a healthy way**—is SO important.

While everyone can benefit from investing time and attention in this critical area of self-care, people who will find this particularly beneficial are those who:

- Have difficulty controlling their emotions
- Are easily affected by others' negative moods
- Struggle to cope with feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment, jealousy, anger, and/or feelings of unworthiness

By regularly engaging in emotional self-care and learning to give yourself grace, you'll be developing healthy coping mechanisms that vastly increase your happiness and sense of well-being.

Examples of Emotional Self-Care Activities

1. Journaling
2. Talking to a Health Coach, Life Coach, therapist, spiritual mentor, or other counselor
3. Utilizing affirmations or mantras

4. Meditation
5. Practicing gratitude

The best way to start tending to your emotional health is to first pay attention to the way you speak to yourself. Noticing if you're engaging in negative self-talk is an important preliminary step toward breaking an unhealthy habit. The second step is to replace that negative self-talk with words that are loving and kind.

Physical Self-Care

Physical self-care is probably what many of us typically think of when we hear the words self-care. This type of self-care refers to **any activities you deliberately engage in to enhance your physical well-being.**

While caring for yourself physically is beneficial for everyone, the way you choose to engage in it will depend on your lifestyle. If you're sitting in an office chair all day, taking your dog for a walk would be a great form of self-care. Conversely, if you're working in construction all day, you might opt for some restorative yoga at the end of your shift.

Examples of Physical Self-Care Activities

1. Being active (going for a walk, a bike ride, taking a fitness class, etc.)
2. Taking a relaxing bubble bath
3. Dancing to your favorite song
4. Getting a massage
5. Taking a nap

Of course, most folks looking for some respite from the everyday grind might not have time to draw a bubble bath or go for an hour-long massage. But physical self-care can actually be much simpler than that: brushing your teeth, doing your hair, even taking five minutes to stretch in the morning are all ways of physically caring for yourself.

Give some thought to what types of physical activities make you feel calm, balanced and happy, and schedule regular time to do them.

Mental Self-Care

Mental self-care encompasses anything you do specifically to stimulate your mind and cultivate a healthy psyche.

It's not about reaching a mental state of nirvana, it's about understanding and developing a loving relationship with your mind.

Do you have a hard time getting out of bed in the morning? Or maybe by the end of a long day your head feels like mush? You'll definitely want to incorporate some of the below mental self-care practices into your everyday life.

Examples of Mental Self-Care Activities

- Listening to a podcast
- Trying a new hobby
- Going to a museum

- Reading a book
- Writing (poetry, journaling, stream-of-consciousness, etc.)

Beyond stimulating activities, mental self-care also encompasses learning how to manage your thoughts, the setting of clear boundaries with friends, family or work, or even recognizing the need to reach out for professional help. Ultimately, mental self-care is about stimulating, nurturing and listening to your big, beautiful brain.

Social Self-Care

Humans are social beings, which means we need regular connection with others to thrive (yes, even introverts!). That's why prioritizing **social self-care**—or **activities that nurture our relationships with others**—is critical.

The problem is, oftentimes when our lives get hectic and overwhelming (and we'd most benefit from facetime with others), we tend to cancel our plans and withdraw. While of course we all need to just say "no" sometimes, it's also extremely important to make time for social interaction. This has become especially pronounced over the last couple years, as more schools and offices are going remote.

If you're living alone, or thrive off the energy of in-person communication, you may be requiring some extra social self-care as of late. Remember that socializing with others, even when you're busy with life, is not a privilege–it's a necessity!

Examples of Social Self-Care Activities

1. Scheduling a regular phone touch-base with your mom
2. Hosting a game night with your friends
3. Going on a date with your significant other
4. Cuddling with a furry friend
5. Writing a card and mailing it to a loved one, shut-in or veteran

While social self-care often means spending time with other people, it can also mean the opposite. Give some thought to which relationships are no longer serving you in your life. If there's anyone you find draining to be around (a friend or family member), it may be time to part ways. Your relationships should uplift and fulfill you, not deflate and drain you.

Spiritual Self-Care

Don't let the name of this one fool you. This form of self-care applies to everyone—religious, atheist, agnostic, or otherwise. **Spiritual self-care encompasses any activities you engage in to connect with and nurture your soul.** This practice is fundamentally about connecting with your inner spirit. For some this may include activities that honor a belief in a higher power (God, the universe or whatever guides you).

Spiritual self-care is a helpful tool for everybody, especially if you're looking to feel more grounded in your day-to-day life. It can provide comfort to those dealing with grief and loss, medical or financial uncertainty, or any of life's other stressful curveballs.

Examples of Spiritual Self-Care Activities

1. Spending time in nature
2. Engaging in prayer or attending a worship service

3. Doing yoga
4. Volunteering for a cause you care about
5. Creating a vision board or doing something else that lights you up and inspires you

While everybody's spiritual self-care is unique to them, there are a few things you can do to set yourself up for success. If you're incorporating a daily spiritual practice into your routine, designate a peaceful and quiet area of your home in which to do so. Try to avoid social media first thing in the morning, and use soul-affirming mantras to help ease into a successful day.

Practical Self-Care

Any actions you take to fulfill your core needs and reduce stress can be catalogued as practical self-care.

Yes, even mundane, everyday activities. Think of how much better you feel when you clean your room or stick to a workout routine; these forms of self-care are admittedly less exciting than others, but not to be underestimated. They are huge sanity-savers and help create a greater sense of calm and control in our busy lives.

Practical self-care can be especially helpful for college students or young professionals, caregivers, stay-at-home parents, or anybody that struggles to stay organized.

Examples of Practical Self-Care Activities

- Organizing your email inbox
- Tidying your living space
- Meeting with a financial advisor
- Setting out your clothes for the week in advance
- Meal prepping

You can also use practical self-care as a way to create sustainable, healthy habits. This includes things like limiting cell phone usage, committing to a better sleep schedule, or the regular decluttering of your living space.

Professional Self-Care

If you're employed, it's essential to make time for **professional self-care. These are the activities and actions that support feeling balanced and fulfilled in your career.**

Even if you love your job and don't find it particularly stressful, incorporating professional self-care into your life can help prevent burnout and keep you inspired.

If you're new to the workforce, have a job with demanding hours, or perhaps are a manager looking to better support your staff, try implementing the below tips.

Examples of Professional Self-Care Activities

- Setting a calendar reminder to take a lunch break
- Spending time with coworkers after hours
- Setting your phone to Do Not Disturb at the end of your work day
- Taking courses, attending conferences, or working with a mentor to develop your skills and support your desired career path

- Taking a mental health (or sick) day when you need it

Boundary-setting at work can be daunting but is so crucial for your mental and physical well-being. Once you achieve a healthier work/life balance, you may find that there's more time to focus on the other six areas of self-care discussed in this article.